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GLENDALÉ'S CHERISHED HOLIDAY TRADITION CREATES POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

GLENDALÉ, Ariz. – As the city of Glendale prepares to begin its 20th Glendale Glitters event, kicking off the season's six-event lineup, it's important to reflect on the impact that these festivals have on the community.

The most obvious impact is on the Glendale business community. The festivals, after all, were planned to draw people to the newly-revitalized downtown area 20 years ago. Over the years, the downtown businesses have communicated that the city's festivals are integral to the success of their businesses. Comments have included: "These events keep our historic town alive;" "This past holiday season has been just wonderful, with so many new visitors finding us while enjoying Glendale Glitters;" and "The special events in downtown Glendale have such an impact on my shop." In addition, the economic impact of the Glendale Glitters opening weekend alone totals around \$1.5 million annually and brings people from across the state and region.

The second impact that Glendale festivals create is the community pride with actual residents and their families. A contest for Glendale residents to appear in a Glendale Glitters television commercial resulted in many entries from those who wished to tell their story about their festival experiences. The following comments and accounts were caught on camera: "You have to see it to believe it and appreciate it...Glendale is everything you want a hometown to be.;" "Glendale Glitters means a lot to our family because we go every year;" "Every year it's an event we plan with our family that we always stick to;" and "We go every year – it's a tradition. It's a charming hometown feel. You can hear the clip-clop of horses, children laughing and snowball fights..." Event staff and downtown merchants have been told often by families that it is an annual tradition, with many folks attending as children, that are now bringing their children. The impact is felt by these stories from Glendale residents and many visitors to the area that truly demonstrate the importance of the event in the community and to residents' quality of life.

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Glendale Glitters Impact

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Finally, the city's festivals have a lasting impact through the money that is funneled back in to the community through a partnership with the Glendale Civic Pride Ambassadors (GCPA). The GCPA is the non-profit partner at Glendale's annual special events. The group's volunteers work the beverage booths at the events, earning a portion of the proceeds for their organization. GCPA, in turn, donates the money earned from the festivals back into the community. Non-profit groups benefitting from festivals proceeds have included: Westside Food Bank, Ballet Arizona, The Boys and Girls Club, Glendale Historic Preservation Commission, Reading Council, Sunrise Lions Club, The Phoenix Symphony, Devereux Arizona, Glendale Police Museum, Glendale Arizona Historical Society, Glendale Rose Society, Habitat for Humanity, Luke Air Force Base military family assistance, Mountain Ridge High School Marching Band Inauguration trip sponsor, various Glendale Parks and Recreation programs, and Glendale Fire Department's Alternative Response Team and Certified Emergency Response Team.

Nancy Lenox, president of the organization, commented, "We really take pride in being part of every event, and welcoming visitors to our downtown area." This civic service group, founded in 1994, has given back a total of \$285,000 to community organizations, over the last 18 years, in keeping with their mission to help promote the economic, social and cultural vitality of Glendale.

"The Civic Pride Ambassadors are a huge support to the community and because of their fundraising they are able to supply generous donations to the Glendale Fire Department's Crisis Response program," said Lynette Jelinek, community outreach coordinator for the Fire Department. "That money enables us to provide much needed resources to people in traumatic situations. We are grateful that we have a collaborative mission to serve the citizens of Glendale."

For more information on Glendale festivals, visit www.glendaleaz.com/events. To view the Glendale Glitters television commercial with favorite family memories, visit <http://youtu.be/irz5usSk8DQ>.

For more information on Glendale Civic Pride Ambassadors, including information on joining the group, call 602-212-6752, visit their website at www.glendalecivicpride.org or e-mail info@glendalecivicpride.org.

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